



September, 1991

Volume XXII Number 8

New S.F. General Director Sees Bigger Clinic Role

The new San Francisco General Hospital Executive Director Richard Cordova's first month on the job has provided him with a sharp vision of just what the hospital can and cannot do — and he's sharing that vision with the hospital's neighbors of Potrero Hill.

Speaking August 13 to members of the Potrero Hill Democratic Club, Cordova, who came to General from the Los Angeles County Hospital system, admitted, "It is not true we can be everything to everybody. The days of the '60s when we had some good money coming in are all gone."

For Cordova, this translates into an emphasis on using the hospital for specialized functions and increasing the use of neighborhood clinics such as the Caleb Clark Potrero Hill Health Center for what is considered primary care.

"It's appropriate that the clinics associated with the hospital provide primary care like a family practice," Cordova stressed, indicating he "will have to link up with the clinics to make sure patients in these health centers are getting medical care on the preventative model."

"When Caleb Clark volunteer Rita Giglio pointed out that 'if the Hill Clinic diminishes services, people will not go to General,' Cordova agreed. "They'll go unserved," he said, "until the paramedics have to pick them up and take them to the General Hospital Emergency Room."

Presaging a recent report in a prestigious medical journal, Cordova admitted that emergency room waiting times at the Hospital were often as long as six hours, and he predicted that "lines to get access

may get longer, time in waiting rooms may get longer."

Currently, some 75-80 percent of General's income comes from patient revenues: Medi-Cal and Medicare reimbursements, other insurance and some individual fees. The balance is paid by San Francisco City and County, which is why the Hospital has consistently faced budget crises in recent years.

Cordova's intent is to "run General more like a business," and since as a public hospital it cannot turn away any patient for lack of funds, as many private hospitals do, he hopes to find ways to increase revenues. Now between 40 and 50 percent of General's patients are eligible for Medi-Cal reimbursements. "We will make about another 25 percent eligible," Cordova vowed.

Acknowledging that "health in this city is very politicized," the new hospital director is gingerly making the rounds of city departments and elected officials.

One of the issues about which he will have to wend his way through the governmental maze is the hospital's parking crisis, which has long plagued both neighbors and employees. At every meeting with staff, he noted, he has been told that "parking is the number one problem."

And what about the parking garage proposed for the current Muni maintenance facility site at 23rd and Utah Streets? "I'll have to visit downtown and find out just what's happening," he said, indicating that the project does not now lie with the hospital but with the City's Dept. of Parking and Traffic.

— J.B.

New Hill Librarian Hopes Cuts Have 'Minimal Impact'

By Judy Baston

On paper, it's called "reduced hours and staffing;" in reality it has been a two-for-one trade with the Anza Branch Library in the far reaches of the Outer Richmond that brought Librarian Debby Jeffrey to be Potrero Branch Librarian and sent former Hill Librarians Kay Roberts and Cathy Nyhan out to breathe the ocean air.

For Jeffrey, an 11 year Hill resident, her new job is a far shorter commute than her former one at the Anza Branch. All the new Potrero Librarian has to do to get to work since August 8 is walk the two blocks from her 20th Street home.

The Potrero Branch changes came about as the result of a library budget crunch in which this neighborhood's library was initially slated to be downgraded to a Reading Center. A loud and swift community outcry prevented the downgrade, but instead of two librarians — one for children's services and one for adults — Jeffrey will be, in essence, filling both slots.

She hopes "the effect of the changes will be minimal." The branch schedule has been cut by three hours per week, and the library will now open at 1 p.m. on Tuesdays, instead of the previous 10 a.m., and it will close on Wednesday evenings at 8 p.m. instead of 9 p.m.

"This will enable me to do the behind the scenes stuff," Jeffrey noted, "selecting books for both children and adults and having to go to twice as many meetings," to cover both the children's and adult librarian roles.

She intends to continue the pre-school film once a month on a morning that the library is closed. Jeffrey, who is "a founding mother of the lapsit program in the city," will continue both the lapsits and family story time, although the pre-school story time program that had taken place on Tuesday mornings will now be incorporated into family story time.

Jeffrey is also committed to continuing the Potrero Branch's Art Show, now in its fourth decade, but stresses that she will have to solicit a committee of volunteers to work with her on the event. She also intends to continue the Children's Art Show.

Although her personal reading tastes include more fiction than non-fiction — mysteries, science fiction, romance and fantasy — Jeffrey says that selection of adult books at the Potrero Branch "will rely heavily on circulation statistics. Adults here like mysteries, books on the arts, good fiction, travel, black studies and books to support writers, as well as the basics such as health and cookbooks."

(Continued on Page 5)



Food, Music, Dance

At Third Hill Festival

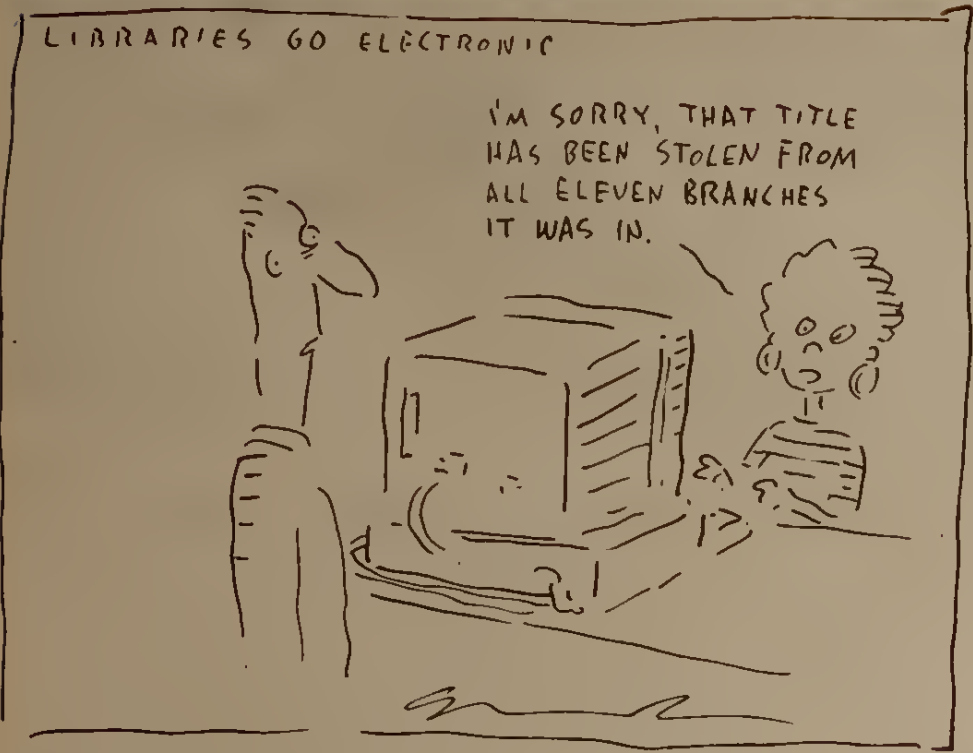
Hill residents will have the chance to celebrate their neighborhood's creative and ethnic diversity at the third annual Potrero Hill Festival, on Saturday, October 19, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Highlighting the Festival will be face-painting and kids' portraits; a stellar lineup of performers; black cowboy storytelling (at the library); crafts, and home-made food, including African specialties. For the first time, the Festival will include a motorized Cable Car tour of Potrero Hill starting at the Daniel Webster school and all around San Francisco's Potrero Hill. A slide exhibit at the Potrero Branch Library will coincide with the tour.

Festival '91 features ongoing performances by violinist Dick Bright; the Latin jazz of Vince Lateano and Madeline Eastman; jazz trumpeter Joe Ellis; the Mary Dollar Samba Dancers with Dennis Broughton, and others to be announced, at the Daniel Webster Schoolyard, Missouri Street between 19th and 20th Streets.

Food and drink, handmade crafts, and commemorative posters by Festival artist Michael Rios will be for sale.

The Festival is sponsored by the San Francisco Arts Commission and the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House, a nonprofit community center. Admission to the Festival is free. Any craftspeople interested in obtaining a Festival booth are encouraged to call Ruth at 826-8080.



IN OUR VIEW

A Ludicrous Law

In the column to the right of this space is an article about life unfortunately imitating what we on the View several years ago hoped was artifice. Our April Fools Day story about a tax on one's view may not be coming true on Potrero Hill, but the surreal is becoming all too real for the folks in Port Hueneme.

What's frightening, however, is that we almost had our own news on the bizarre and illogical legislation front. Just as our paper was going to press last month, the State Legislature agreed on a budget that contained a sales tax on all newspapers in California. And although the very phrase "sales tax" implies that the tax covers something that is sold, nothing in the tax exempted free newspapers such as The View and dozens of similar journals in communities and schools throughout the city and the entire state. Since there were no sales revenues to tax, papers such as The View would have to pay the state's new hefty sales tax on our sizeable printing bill.

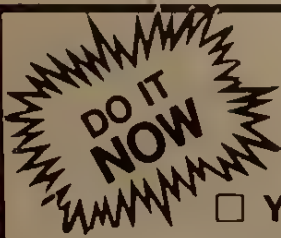
Fortunately, Potrero Hill Assemblyman John Burton immediately saw how ludicrous it was to tax an item that isn't even sold, and his measure exempting free newspapers from this tax sailed through the Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee and now has been promised the okay of Governor Pete Wilson.

This silly sales tax scare came just as the View turned 21 years old. And it underscored dramatically the modus operandi that we believe has helped keep The View going all these years since it was born back in August, 1970. We are still completely a volunteer paper. Our advertising revenues simply pay the printing bill. In that, we may be unique even among free newspapers; most have some paid staff, and those papers known as "shoppers" simply seek advertising revenue, which ends up lining someone's pocket.

The way the world is changing these days often makes us feel more than a bit like an anachronism. We're not about profits, we're not about a pot of gold to fight over or divvy up. What we try to be about is providing the information, ideas, and occasionally the insight to help keep Potrero Hill an active and committed community.

And how the heck can you slap a sales tax on that?

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A Tax on Views, or How
Life Imitates April Fool

By Vas Arnautoff

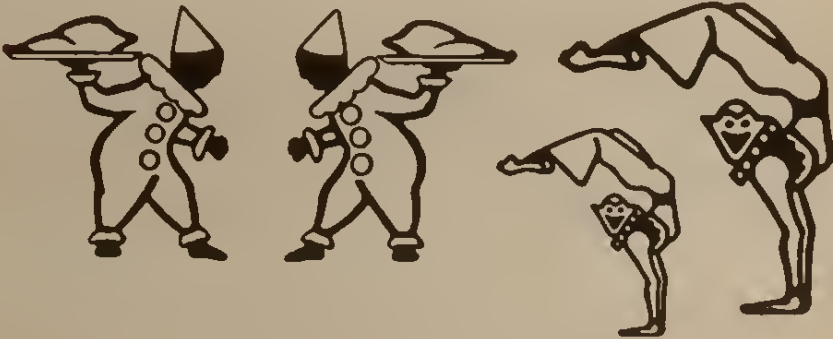
Some years ago, when spring rolled around, The View ran a few April Fool stories — like city plans to convert a PG&E tank into a flexible stadium, and a scheme to put a special tax on homeowners with nice views. The latter involved a convoluted formula using number of windows, their size, orientation, etc. to determine the rate. And when a few of our readers took some of the items seriously, the staff indulged in a few self-congratulatory chuckles.

Well, they're not chuckling in Port Hueneme. The city fathers of that cash-strapped community, scrambling for ways to increase income, have hit upon a "view tax" on beachfront homeowners. They indignantly deny that it is a tax, preferring to call it a "beach assessment district charge," a distinction that ranks it right up there in the Mother-of-all-Euphemisms Sweepstakes.

The "assessments" in Port Hueneme run from \$66 to \$184 based on a formula that (you guessed it) takes into account how much of the sea a homeowner actually can see and the size of the home.

We hope Port Hueneme is too small to catch our own City Hall's attention.

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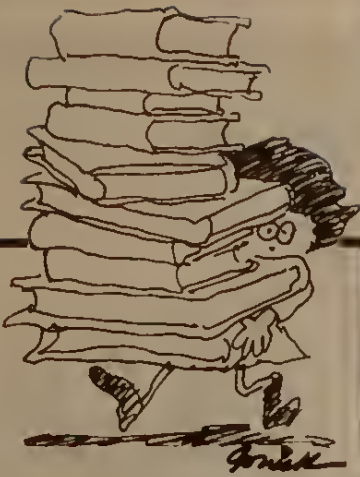
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LIBRARY NEWS
POTRERO BRANCH
1616 20th St. 285-3022

Closed Monday
Tuesday 1 - 6 pm
Wednesday 1 - 8 pm
Thurs., Fri., & Sat. 1 - 6 pm



NEW ADULT BOOKS

In Keith Mano's "Topless," Episcopal priest Father Mike Wilson searches for his missing brother, who is the owner of a Queens restaurant. The restaurant turns out to be a topless bar with murder and the mob on the menu. Whatever will the Bishop say?

Author Park Godwin looks behind the myth and few historical facts about Robin Hood in his new novel, "Sherwood," an enthralling tale of what might really have happened in Sherwood Forest.

"Aikido For Life," by Gaku Homma, describes the Aikido approach to integrated body-mind fitness.

In "Donadieu's Will," old Oscar Donadieu, a pillar of society and family patriarch, vanishes while changes in his household slowly begin to take place. A gripping drama by French author Georges Simenon.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

INFANT-TODDLER LAPSIT for ages birth to three years is every Wednesday at 1:30 p.m.

FAMILY STORY TIME for ages three and older is every Wednesday at 7 p.m.

FILMS: "Strega Nona," "Three Little Pigs," and "Tom Thumb" for ages 3-5 on Tuesday, Sept. 10 at 10 a.m. Please enter through the side door. The library is now closed on Tuesday morning.

Debby Jeffrey
Potrero Branch Librarian

NEW CHILDREN'S BOOKS

"The Boy's War," by Jim Murphy, includes diary entries, letters and photos to describe the experiences of boys who fought in the Civil War. A fascinating read for age nine years and older.

Preschoolers will love "Little Penguin Tale," written and illustrated by Audrey Wood. While all the penguins listen to Grand Nanny's tale, mischievous Little Penguin almost loses his tail.

"Oprah Winfrey" describes her childhood from a Mississippi farm to her success in television and movies. An inspiring look at this intelligent and talented woman by Anne Saidman.

Ten-year-old Jennifer wishes for and gets wings overnight in Susan Green's "Self-Portrait With Wings," a sometimes funny, sometimes sad story for anyone who wanted to feel special but felt different instead.

MUNI - BART Tix at NABE

MUNI and BART tickets are available at the Neighborhood House, 953 De Haro St., Mondays through Fridays, during office hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Senior Muni \$4.50
Youth Muni \$5.00
Senior BART \$1.60

For more information
- call 826-8080



Potrero Hill Neighborhood House

953 De Haro Street • San Francisco, California • (415) 826-8080
Enola D. Maxwell, Executive Director

Ongoing Neighborhood House Community Meetings

Omega Boys Club - Full Meetings	1st & 3rd Thursdays	7:30 PM
Omega Weekly Meetings	Every Tuesday	7:30 PM
Potrero Hill Girls Club	Mondays	5:00 - 7:00 PM
Student Study Hall	Tuesdays	5:00 - 7:00 PM
Youth Council Meetings	Wednesdays	6:00 PM
A1 - Anon	Thursdays	6:30 - 7:30 PM
Alcohol Anonymous	Sun, Mon, & Thurs	8:30 PM
Cocaine Anonymous	Saturdays	6:00 - 7:00 PM

The Potrero Hill Neighborhood House offers ongoing programs for developmentally disabled adults which include basic education, cultural enrichment, consumer & health education, field trips, sensomotor development, work training, group and individual counseling.

Senior Citizens enjoy hot meals every weekday at a nominal charge. Continuing senior programs include bingo games, information & referral counseling, social hour, games & recreation.

The "NABE" provides facilities & meeting space for use by community groups, individuals and businesses. These facilities include the auditorium for theatre presentations, lectures, workshops and wedding receptions.

Child care is available at the Child Development Center and the Potrero Hill Neighborhood Theatre produces scheduled performances throughout the year. Other community facilities include a mini-park, Arts & Crafts classes, Photography workshops and classes, a gymnasium and recreational space plus a bulletin board with job and event listings.

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TEN YEARS AGO
In The View

BY ANY OTHER NAME

The renaming of a two-block stretch of Kansas Street to Henry Adams Street in honor of the late developer of the Showplace/Galleria complex drew the ire of some Hill residents ten years ago. But it was another Hill resident — then Assemblyman Art Agnos — who proposed the change, which Board of Supervisors President John Molinari put to the Board. Letters to the View scored the change as symbolizing "the thoughtlessness and lack of neighborhood sensitivity that the Showplace and Galleria have exhibited since their inception." Mayor Dianne Feinstein disagreed. At the name change ceremony, she lauded Adams for building "a future that is upwardly mobile and sensitive to the needs of the community." . . . But that wasn't the only controversy involving Showplace Square. Local 87 of the Building Service Employees Union, which had been picketing the complex since July 15, removed its pickets but vowed they would return to protest the use of non-union custodial employees.

MUNI CHANGES

While still playing "Not-on-my-Street," Hill Muni patrons were able to win some concessions over routing of various lines over the Hill. At issue were the 35-Eureka (now the 48-Quintara-24th St.) and the 53-Southern Heights, which today run pretty much the routes proposed in 1981.

HOUSING PROTEST

Potrero Public Housing Project tenants, frustrated over delays in maintenance, initiated a rent-withholding tactic, which after a month had failed to impress city housing officials. Paulette Faison, then president of the Potrero Tenants Improvement Assn., said that "at least half" of the 530 families in the project had expressed support for the pressure tactic.

THIS AND THAT. . .

"Chu Chu and the Philly Flash," starring Carol Burnett and Alan Arkin, was being filmed on Potrero Hill . . . Asimakopoulos Cafe opened at its new location at 18th and Connecticut Streets . . . The Streets and Transportation Committee of the Board of Supervisors tabled plans for a stairway to replace the natural walkway connecting Rhode Island and DeHaro Streets at 19th Street. Property owners and residents in the area opposed the project . . . And from the Classifieds: "REWARD: Lost set of keys (with bottle opener attached)" . . . Also: "\$25 reward for info leading to rental of small 1 bdrm or studio apt. Will consider sharing. \$200-\$275. . ."

Vas Arnautoff

REMEMBERING RAY TOWBIS



They came to a party for the late Ray Towbis because they remembered a feisty, demanding, endearing and remarkable man who touched their lives in many different ways. Sheriff Michael Hennessey invited Towbis' friends to a party to celebrate a life incredibly well-spent. Hennessey's immediate right hand aide, Towbis helped bring major changes to the Sheriff's Office and their method of incarceration for the county's prisoners. The party was held at Cafferata Ravioli Factory on Potrero Hill. Owner Gino Biradelli is seen above (left) with Hennessey flanking an enlarged photo of Towbis. Current and former civic dignitaries, ex-cons, working people, community workers and family members rekindled memories and exchanged Towbis "stories" throughout the day. Towbis died of heart failure July 18.

Ruth Passen photo

Teens Edit, Design, Market Their Own Children's Book

By Stephanie Potter

For 14-year-old Aviva Cushner, a typical day's work in recent weeks might have included a phone call to the White House, a photo session with **The Chronicle** or an appearance on local radio.

As part of the Junior Publishing Program, she and 15 other students spent six weeks this summer learning the intricacies of the publishing business — editing, designing and marketing their own book at Foghorn Press on Potrero Hill. They selected book reviews and drawings submitted by children from all over the Bay Area; and their book, entitled "Books We Love Best," will serve as a practical guide to children's literature.

Local publishers provided guidance and instruction to the students, who were recommended by their teachers to participate in the program. Vicki Morgan, president of Foghorn Press, donated space and helped to coordinate their activities, but the kids themselves were in charge of their creation. They also received course credit through the San Francisco Summer School Program.

The work was hard, but well worth it. Lucy Acerno, 12, who worked with Cushner on the marketing committee, admitted that "it's hard calling people who're stern or scary — and you don't know if they're going to be really nice or mean."

Nevertheless, she's had fun learning about "the real working world," even though it meant getting up at 7:30 every morning to catch her bus. "If I could, I'd be sleeping until eight or even nine."

The day started at 9 a.m. but ended by 1 p.m., even though sometimes the kids

found themselves bringing work home. Although most live in San Francisco, a number came from Oakland and even further. Eli Sarnat, 13, was up at 6:30 a.m. to catch the train from Portola Valley, and Esther Odekirk, 14, who spent the summer with her grandmother in Fremont, left home at 7:15 every morning and didn't get home until 3 p.m. She's developed a profound aversion to long-distance commuting.

She's also realized "how much work goes into publishing a book." As a member of the design committee, she helped with decisions about multitudes of details related to page layout, graphics, type, and front and back cover designs. There were endless meetings with the entire group selecting and then rejecting cover formats — would it be book worms or space aliens? Border or not? What color? One girl realized her little brother would object to the book if it were decorated with hearts — "too girlish and mushy." (The design committee, however, did manage to slip a small heart onto the book's spine.)

It was up to the editorial committee to decide which reviews to accept. Hundreds of reviews had been submitted by students from kindergarten to 12th grade. "The hardest part has been reading every single review. Sometimes you don't understand what they're really trying to say," said Sherri Marshall, managing editor, who just turned 17. However, her team was committed to presenting the review as written, with occasional punctuation or spelling corrections, in order to preserve the original tone of each author. Genni Schmidt, 12, added, "We're just making them make sense, but the meaning hasn't been changed."



Youngsters enrolled in the Junior Publishers Program at Foghorn Press read through many articles before choosing the final ones included in their published volume, "Books We Love Best." Professionals in the publishing field lectured the young editors and helped with final choices.

Ruth Passen photo

Marshall enjoyed going to work each day, being in the office, and having a title — "it makes us feel important," she said. "But it's not the first time I've been an editor on something that's been published." She's in the media program at Fremont High in Oakland, and has been involved in numerous publishing projects.

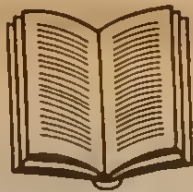
Promotion of the book has been the responsibility of the marketing committee — working on press releases; setting up reviews by local media; getting comments from local authors for the back cover; planning the publishers' party, and inviting local celebrities and public officials. Cushner started out in production, "but after a week I switched to marketing and had some major successes so I decided to stay."

She was pleased to have persuaded Marilyn Sachs, children's author and editor of "The Big Book for Peace," and Amy Tan, author of "The Joy Luck Club," to write endorsements. She's learned, "The hardest part of this is rejection. It's nervewracking when I call people and they say they're not interested." Barbara Bush and Herb Caen fell into that category.

With one week to go before the book was scheduled to be at the printer's, activity was pretty hectic, and many of the kids described it as "crunch" time. But they all expected to be finished on schedule, and to see the book distributed to retail outlets throughout the Bay Area by mid-September.

The Junior Publishers Program has been a project of the San Francisco Bay Area Book Festival, where the book will have its own booth on November 2-3 at the San Francisco Concourse Exhibition Center. Proceeds from the sale of the book, which will be priced at \$4.95, will go toward supporting literacy programs in the public schools. Individual teachers will receive grants of \$100 - 150 for implementing such programs.

(Participants in the Junior Publisher Program will be at the Modern Times Bookstore, 968 Valencia St., on Sept. 29 at 7 p.m., with their creation "Books We Love Best.")



Paintings by Beth Foley are featured at the Joseph Chowning Gallery, 1717-17th St. Sept. 7 - Oct. 10. The exhibit includes the oil painting seen above, "The Right Spot: Elvis Sighting #2." A reception for the artist takes place at the Gallery on Sept. 7 from 2-4 p.m. Phone 626-7496 for info.

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Hill Resident Debby Jeffrey Is New Potrero Librarian

Jeffrey spent four years as a reference and children's librarian at the Main Library, then worked at the Noe Valley and Anza Branches before coming to the Potrero Library. She looks forward to buying adult books, but notes that "adults read a lot of book reviews and see author promotions. Adults are being controlled more than kids about what to read."

In her previous assignments, she had a number of youngsters "make good suggestions" to her about what books to buy for the library. She also recalls "developing a reading relationship with kids, in which you see a book and say to yourself, 'So-and-so would want to read it.'"

Jeffrey knows that if a youngster comes into the library only to get information for a school report or because a parent is coming in for a book, "it's important to get them to relax. If they're reluctant readers, I have to find something they would enjoy reading."

She admits it's difficult to get child-

ren to ask for books. Children distrust adults a lot, because adults generally don't respect a child as a whole person." And she urges parents of very young children or youngsters with reading difficulties to take out books to read to their children, not to force the children to read, but to show that reading can be a pleasurable experience.

"I married into the Hill," she notes, adding that "Now people know my husband, Mark Wiegang, better than they know me, but I have a feeling that's about to change."

The 20th Street house they purchased eight years ago had a most appropriate incentive: its basement contained boxes of old mystery novels. Wiegang collects old mysteries, especially old first edition paperbacks. Jeffrey collects antiquarian children's books, such as those by Beatrix Potter.

But, she notes, "We have very few practical books. For that, we use the library." Then she gestured around the the Potrero Branch: "This is my collection."



New Potrero Branch Librarian Debby Jeffrey shows new display rack, part of branch's roomier, more open design. *Judy Baston photo*

Demo Club Endorses Agnos 25 - 1

Members of the Potrero Hill Democratic Club, voting August 13, overwhelmingly endorsed Art Agnos for Mayor by a 25-1 tally.

Agnos, a former longtime resident of Potrero Hill, greeted the endorsement of his old neighbors with enthusiasm.

"I'm so proud to have the endorsement of my former neighbors," Agnos said. "Potrero Hill stands for the progressive values that I have used to guide my decisions in public life, and their endorsement means a great deal to me."



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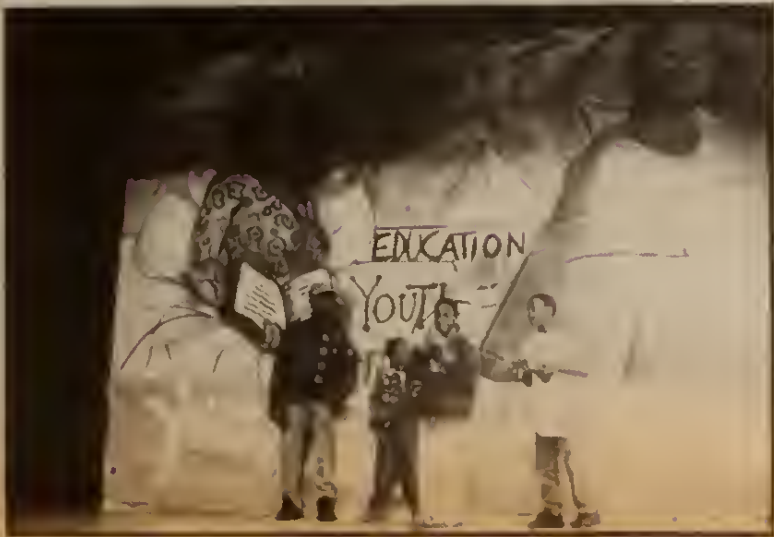
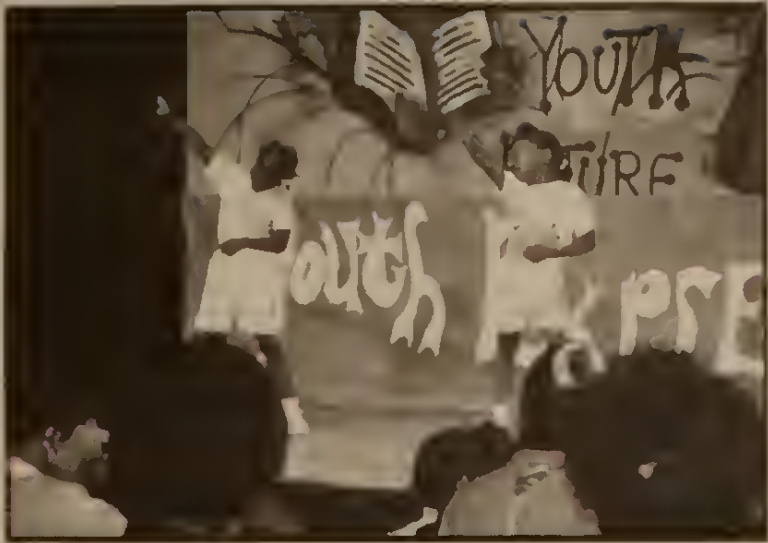
HAIR DESIGN FOR MEN AND WOMEN

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IT WAS YOUTH EXPRESSIONS DAY AT THE NABE

Potrero Hill youngsters who spend their summers participating in activities at the Neighborhood House get to perform in an "end of the summer" program. The children strut onto the stage in outfits made especially for them by Nabe staffer Joyce Armstrong, and then break into dance. Youth Expression Day August 18 brought forth new local talent. A group of boys aged 9-11 prepared a short anti-drug skit, and African dances were performed by two nine year olds. Guest teen performers from the Western Addition and Bayview/Hunters Point received thunderous applause for their dances and appearance on the Hill. The mural backdrop "Up From Slavery," was created by Artist-In-Residence Michael Rios.



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Music, dance, food, wine-tasting, contests, non-stop entertainment are all promised at the 10th annual San Francisco Fair at Civic Center Plaza, Labor Day weekend at 10 a.m. each day. Tickets are priced at \$5 for adults; under 18 \$4; five and under, free; and \$2 for seniors 55 and over. Potrero Hill kids will take part in an opening day parade.



The Bay View Boat Club and Mariposa/Hunters Point Yacht Club celebrate their 3rd Annual Wooden Boat Festival Sept. 21 and 22 at China Basin. Lots of races, including row boats and sailing. And, lovers of powerboats will gather along the Bay for the Sixth Annual "Race to Preserve Historic Ships," which takes place Sept. 6-7. That race begins at the Ferry Building, races under the Bay Bridge, along the Embarcadero, past Alcatraz Island, through the Golden Gate and back.

The S.F. Recreation and Parks Dept. has the following on its schedule for the beginning of September. On Monday, Sept. 2 the S.F. Shakespeare Company performs Fratelli Bologna's "Medea, Ancient Greek Tragedy" at Liberty Tree Meadow, Golden Gate Park, 1:30 p.m., free. On the same day at 2 p.m. the S.F. Mime Troupe will perform at Dolores Park, 19th and Dolores. On Tuesday, Sept. 3 there will be art classes for seniors at the Senior Center, 6101 Fulton St., from 12:30 to 3 p.m. A 50 cents fee. Cabrillo Playground will be the site for piano classes for children ages 6 to 10. Call 751-3533 to enroll.

The Jewish Community Information and Referral offers a free telephone resource line, listing information on congregations throughout the area which are open to non-members who wish to observe Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year (begins at sunset, Sept. 8), and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement (begins at sunset, Sept. 17). Call weekdays, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 777-4545 for details.

Celebrate the 16th annual Senior Picnic, sponsored by The Salvation Army Sept. 19 at Stern Grove. For free transportation from Potrero Hill see Joe Jenkins at the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House. Call 826-8080 for more info.

Footwork is presenting "Local 4," a showcase for artists in dance, theater and new performance, on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 6 and 7 at its theater space at 3221 22nd St. at Mission. The 8:30 p.m. performances will display the artistry of Erica Essner, Wayne Hazzard, Jorge Lopez and Cathleen McCarthy. Admission \$7. Phone 824-5044 for more details.

Project Open Hand, the non-profit agency which feeds people with AIDS in San Francisco, Oakland and Berkeley is in desperate need of volunteer drivers to help get meals out. Volunteers can work as little as two hours per week. Phone Project Open Hand at 255-2529 for information about their weekly orientation meeting.

Potrero Station's foot patrol officer Dorothy Shurtleff was featured in a "Top Cops" television episode Aug. 8. In her career with the San Francisco Police Dept., "Officer Dorothy," as she is known in the neighborhood, had once worked undercover in the city's Tenderloin district. She worked disguised as an old bag lady, and was robbed a great number of times. Her back-up team of undercover cops kept close watch and arrested several dozen would-be assailants.

A potpourri of free activities occurs each month at most of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) parks in the Bay Area. For instance: The Presidio offers a three mile history hike Sept. 4 and 21, from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Meet the park ranger at Mountain Lake Park (and return by Muni bus #28.) Reservations are needed. And learn the history of the Golden Gate at Fort Point on Sunday, Sept. 8 and 22, from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Meet the park ranger at the statue of Jos. Strauss at the viewing area beside toll plaza at south end of bridge. Call 556-0865 or 556-1874 for more info. Also at Fort Point: A video of Ellis Island, gateway to the USA for millions of immigrants. The video is shown on request. Call 556-1693 for more info.

One of the Hill's active artists, Christine Marie Lando, reports that her painting "Studio 363" is included in an exhibition at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, from Sept. 21 - Dec. 8. The work is part of "Recent Acquisitions of the Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts Part Two: 1950-1991."

Gay and Lesbian Outreach for Elders is calling for talent for their Second Annual GLOE Show, needing singers, dancers, writers and other artists. Anyone 50 years of age and over is welcome to audition on Monday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m. Call 626-7000 for info and appointment.

Music around the Hill: Many of the popular musicians who will be entertaining at the Potrero Festival (see story Page 1) can be heard at The Ramp on China Basin during the month. Joe Ellis, Madeline Eastman (and friends), Viva Brasil and Batucada, The Icons and The Essentials, Mojo Zydeco all appear weekends at the eat and drinkery at the eastern base of our hill. Call 621-2378 for more info.

The Potrero Hill Theatre will be holding auditions in September for November production. For further information contact Ben Sauls at 822-1585 or 452-4674.

The UCSF Women's Resource Center offers diverse lectures and workshops throughout the month on subjects including "Sexual Harassment," "Car Care and Safety," "Family Law," and "Winnie Mandela: The Persecution of a Freedom Fighter." The lectures are free, and for further info call 476-5836. The UCSF Mobile Mammography Van has a schedule of breast cancer screenings throughout the city in September and October. The exam costs \$50 and takes no more than 20 minutes. The only requirement is written or verbal approval from a doctor. Call 990-0459 or 476-2193 for appointment.



San Francisco residents may dispose of up to five gallons of liquid and 50 pounds of solids for free at the Household Hazardous Waste Facility on Thursdays through Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Take 101 south to the Candlestick Park turnoff to Beatty Road and turn right on Tunnel Road. Details at 666-7107.

The September meeting of the Gay and Lesbian Artists' Alliance will be held Sept. 7 from 6 to 9 p.m. A general meeting will be followed by a potluck dinner.

A contribution is requested. The event takes place at 953 De Haro (Neighborhood House). Further information at 863-0212.

Specialists in childhood health at U.C. San Francisco are looking for families with kindergarten-age children to participate in a new research project on the relationship between starting school and the incidence of colds and respiratory illnesses. Call Sally Adams in the UCSF behavioral and developmental pediatrics division at 476-4575 for more details.

A new Smokers Anonymous support group meets Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. at the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House, 953 De Haro St. For info, call 826-8080 and ask for Ron.

Paper Tiger Television on KQED? Well, sort of. PTTV's latest video, "San Francisco Says No . . . to the New World Order," will be projected on the outside wall of the new KQED building at Mariposa and York Streets at 8 p.m., Sept. 11. Paper Tiger is using this method to protest the public broadcasting station's "neglect of local independent videomakers."

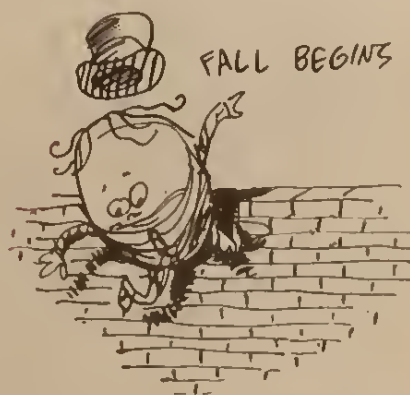
A Potrero Garden Club, now forming, will hold its first organizational meeting at the Potrero Branch Library from 1 to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 21. It will be an opportunity to meet fellow gardeners and discuss horticulture in the Hill's particular "banana belt" microclimate. Children are welcome. Details from Mia Amato at 285-6807.

"Battle Lines: The Cartoon Art of WW II" will be featured at the Cartoon Art Museum, 665 Third St., from Sept. 14 to Dec. 28. The exhibit will display animation cels, comic strips, comic books, editorial cartoons and video displays which give viewers another way to gauge the mood of the American public during the years of national emergency, 1941-45. More info at 546-3922.

Mt. Zion/U.C. San Francisco's Art for Recovery program will hold an exhibit of art work by children and adults with cancer or AIDS at Congregation Sherith Israel, 2266 California St., from Sept. 13 through Oct. 1. The hours are Monday through Friday from 1 to 4 p.m.

Free prostate cancer screening exams are being offered starting Sept. 23 at Mt. Zion Hospital and at U.C. San Francisco. The screenings, open to men over 40, will be at Mt. Zion's outpatient clinic, 1600 Divisadero St., from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sept. 23. UCSF will offer the exams on Sept. 25 from 9 to 5 at their urology clinic, 400 Parnassus Ave., Rm. 610. The Veterans Affairs Medical Center, 4150 Clement St., will offer free screenings to vets only on Sept. 16, 23 and 30 from 9 a.m. to noon. Details at 476-8798.

Modern Times Bookstore offers a free reading of "The Red Angel" by Vivian McGuckin Raineri, biographer of Elaine Black Yoneda, a lifelong activist in the Bay Area labor and communist movement. The event takes place Friday, Sept. 6 at 8 p.m. at 968 Valencia St. Call 282-9246 for more info.



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Period Pieces and Fantasy Keep Set Builders Busy

By Sally Taylor

If you had wandered into an anonymous looking old building below the 20th Street overpass a few weeks ago, you would have seen full-sized portraits from the Imperial Court of Russia.

An art hijacker's hideaway discovered? No. Only an artful illusion. For in this building, fantasy is made — not the electronic, on-screen stuff of "Industrial Light & Magic," but the spectacular, bigger-than-life, on-stage dramas of the San Francisco Opera.

What? Opera? On Potrero Hill?

Yes, neighbors, for years we have hosted the Opera's only stage workshop. Here artists and carpenters, like Santa's helpers in work clothes, scurry about creating everything from 15-foot-tall canvases depicting Napoleon's defeat at the Battle of Waterloo to Louis XIV sofas and rocks the size of a man.

Look closely and you'll see where the shortcuts make such efforts suitable only for the illusions of the stage. The Baroque gilding is rough and often just painted in, the padded velvet cushion is roughly stapled in place, the paint strokes are bold, the rocks are just big pieces of foam.

But from just a couple of feet away, those shortcuts are invisible and the effect is realer than real.

The day we visit, "War & Peace" is the major opera being created. Antiques and master art works of another period are taking shape in a matter of hours. Stepping among the workers, the wood shavings and the wet paint, is a tight little band of well-dressed women, led by one of the workers. Taking it all in but also carefully watching their steps, they manage to focus on each new item while, in quick, successive turns of their heads, avoiding the open cans of wet paint and the spinning table saws. "Major donors," one carpenter explains to me. "They pay my salary."

"This is the busiest summer we've ever had, though," Head Scenic Artist Jay Kotcher says without hesitation. "We've had to rent two other buildings in the neighborhood, just to get all the work done in time." Besides "War & Peace," a huge project, due to go into technical rehearsals August 20, the workshop had two smaller productions to finish.

"I've been lucky that most of the movie and TV studios finished up in San Francisco in May and went back to L.A. That left me with a windfall of talented artists and carpenters I could hire this summer," Kotcher says.

This is a union shop, and almost everybody here is covered under one or another of what Kotcher says are "dozens" of unions involved in the theatre world. He can hire non-union workers for one month consecutively, but most choose to sign up, if they haven't already.

A group of set and stage builders live on Potrero Hill and form a kind of community, according to Allen Gross, who is on the construction crew for "War &

Peace." Gross also works on the technical crew in movies and TV when the opera and other theatrical events aren't in gear.

Gross studied the technical side of the theater business at San Francisco State, Penn State and Temple University. "Then I taught for a while, but I enjoy doing the work; every job is different. In movies, we had to make things look real, but here, it's mostly period pieces and fantasy," he notes.

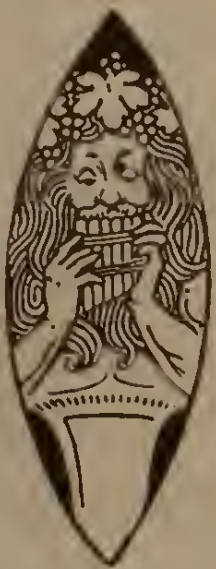
This current project is not all that is magical about this building, which stretches over a city block down into a shadowed distance. Here, a "library" of 30 years' productions fills the dead-end half of the building. A giant's library, with eight-foot wide by 40 foot tall slots labeled with each opera's name and the date of its most recent use in production.

Carefully stacked, sometimes right to the ceiling, dozens of thick ugly spears 15 feet high are bundled, wedged between plywood flats painted to look like thick green forests; white and gold rococo king's chambers; dark stone dungeon walls, and rolled canvases painted to look like bricks. Various furniture of one period or another will be stacked, seven or eight at once. Huge "granite" rocks pile high. "Marble" Greek statues that would be the columns on the Parthenon's Temple of Maidens, made of foam, stand calmly on their heads.

They are not standing idle, however. In fact, this is the profitable end of the business. For example, the "Mephistopheles" set made here was rented to the Houston Opera for six performances for \$75,000, plus expenses. "The Barber of Seville" goes out regularly for productions around the world for \$20,000 a pop.

Even walking among these neck stretching cabinets, echoes of the songs and the shows filter down: the wrought iron gates from "Il Trovatore," the birch trees from "Don Carlos," fantastical plastic forests from "Orlando."

"When the curtain goes down at the end of the performance," says Kotcher, "the applause of the audience is for the singers. But when the curtain goes up at the beginning, and the audience applauds, that's for us."



At the San Francisco Opera warehouse— located at the base of Potrero Hill — skilled workers finish larger than life canvases (above), and build a myriad of sets. The carpentry shop (below) handles the maze of wood needed for each opera production.

Jim Boldocchi photos



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Rios Reflects a Seeking Spirit in La Raza Show

By Lise M. Dumont

San Francisco artist Michael Rios has been panning for gold and has managed to come up with a lot of pure, shining nuggets. They are on display as paintings and drawings in a one-man show, his first, entitled "Flowers and Seeds," at La Raza Graphics Center, 938 Valencia St.

Best known to most for his dramatic Mission District murals, Rios is perhaps better known on Potrero Hill as creator of the Potrero Hill Festival posters and as Artist-in-Residence at the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House, granted through the California Arts Council and San Francisco Arts Commission. After many heady years of mural painting around the Bay, from his first in 1971, Rios has been focusing the past several years on painting and drawing on canvas.

He credits the kids to whom he teaches art at the Neighborhood House as major influencers of his work. "They're not contrived and pretentious like adults can be. They just express themselves. I get excited being around their spirit, being around their energy. A lot of them are socially underprivileged, yet they have a spark in their eyes. They want to be little artists, little musicians, little dancers."

Like these kids, Rios tends to see the positive side of life, and it is obvious in his work. Filled with clowns and animals, guitars and rhythm, mermaids and flowers, the paintings are vibrantly colored and jauntily composed. Even those with a somber theme — such as "Chains of Freedom," a portrait of an enchained slave — show hope.

By contrast, many of his clowns in otherwise jubilant compositions appear sad, as in "El Sueño Azul" and "Nikko's Ark." Said Rios: "That's the irony of life; comedy is juxtaposed with tragedy. A lot of people put on a smile when they're really sad." Rios loves art and music for

this very reason. "When you walk into a gallery of beautiful art, or hear beautiful music, you forget for a moment that you have bills."

Rios not only respects the power of art to change attitude but realizes the importance of his own attitude to his art. "You can walk out of the house and dwell on the dog do-do, or you can look up at the sky and see the beauty there." Referring to the last several years, he notes, "It's not so much that I'm polishing my art; I'm polishing my life first so that it reflects in my art. You can't be a bad person and make good art."

Defining a unifying theme in his show at La Raza, Rios said, "I think it's all the result of a seeking spirit and a seeking mind. It's like panning for gold. Sometimes you find a nugget but a lot of times you just get rock. It's like going someplace you've never been before. Each one was an experiment."

"Flowers and Seeds" stays at La Raza Graphics Center through Sept. 27. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Stop by and forget for a moment that you have bills.



Artist Michael Rios points out details in his painting, "Tranquillidad," one of 36 works in current La Raza Graphics exhibit.
Judy Boston photo

Spotlight on Local Stages

Along with the annual back-to-school merchandising fever, September brings a promising flurry of live theater activity to Potrero area stages.

On Valencia Street, the Marsh ("A breeding ground for new performance") is presenting Palestinian actress/playwright Emily Shihadeh in her one-woman show, "Grapes and Figs are in Season," now through Sept. 22. Shihadeh was one of the 10 writers who created the S.F. Mime Troupe's controversial "Seeing Double." The current piece — subtitled "A Palestinian Woman's Story" — evidently reflects a similar mixture of wry humor and deep concern. The Marsh is located in the rear of Cafe Beano, 878 Valencia near 20th Street where dinner is available before and after most shows. 641-0235.

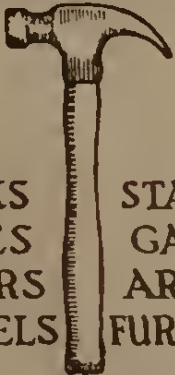
On Sept. 5, almost around the corner, the Capp St. Center (between 18th & 19th) will be opening "Brigadista," a "humorous,

probing play" with music, about the journey of a young woman (a norteamericana) through Nicaragua during the 1990 elections. This show is scheduled to run through Sept. 28; 526-7451.

Theater Artaud joins forces with Multi Image Showcase to present the movement oriented group, Pontifex in their current production, "Exposures;" Sept. 5-8, at the Artaud, Florida at 17th Street. 621-7797.

In another joint venture, Theatre Rhinoceros will host the Honolulu-based Starving Artists Theatre Company, presenting "Hold Back the Ocean," a tale of the romantic journey of two young men, an American and a half-Hawaiian, back to Hawaii. The effect on their relationship of the ancient Hawaiian culture is illuminated by a "brilliant, exotic male Hula dance." Open Sept. 26. Call 861-5079.

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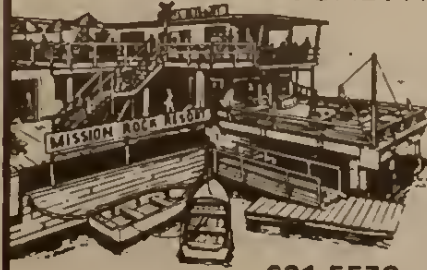
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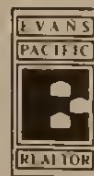
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'Super Godmommy' Spurs View Softballers' Victory

It may have been the ghost of Brooks Robinson past that inspired View softball coach Tom Murray to turn in such a fine defensive display, robbing the East Bay Express of a victory. Murray, wearing that old Orioles cap that has been collecting dust and dirt for many years, came through with an inspirational victory worthy of Robinson, his childhood hero. Both teams played outstanding defense throughout the day, but somehow those four diving plays on Express line drives turned the tide, and the View outlasted their East Bay rivals in a 15 - 9 battle at Mosswood Park.

Returning to Mosswood against the Express revives many a memory for both teams as this field has witnessed fierce competition between these two squads for well over a decade. Many of the chief participants still remain after all these years of battle.

The View jumped out to an early first inning lead with four runs, which was

started off by Mr. Hustle, Joe Pierce, stretching the opening hit into a double. Successful hits by the meat of the order led to an early lead. Great defense was displayed by View third sacker Rick Girling in the third with two assists on hot grounders and one put-out on a line drive. But in the fourth, the Express was not to be denied as they came back with three runs to close the gap to one. In the bottom of the fourth the View retaliated for two more runs to up their lead to 6 - 3. But the Express was not to be stopped in the fifth when they combined to crush two more runs home to narrow the lead to 6 - 5.

Things started to turn the View's way in the sixth with Mielenhausen, Pulaski, Wolfele and Sondheim all hitting ringing shots and Wolf driving in a run to advance the View lead to 10 - 5. But in the top of the seventh, the Express frenzied back for three more to again cut the lead to one. In this see-saw affair,

the View knew it had to keep the pressure on and they again struck for three with Jennifer Ikuta legging out a critical infield hit for an r.b.i. single. The View had a slim 13 - 9 lead going into the eighth.

This is when the defense really took over for the View with Christy Earle making a tough catch on a slicing ball in right, followed up by two diving catches by the modern incarnation of the aforementioned Mr. Robinson to thwart any possible rally by the Express. Again the View came back in the bottom of the eighth for two more with Mielenhausen, Pulaski, Wolfele and Sondheim coming through in the clutch. The ninth inning was an open and shut case as Wolfele notched yet another victory by getting the side out in order.

You may ask who was the hero of such a hard-fought contest. It was the "player" not seen in the box score, or for that matter at the field. It was none other

than "Super Godmommy," Eileen Burke, who got out of her sick bed to babysit the little monster, Shana Murraywolf, so the longtime Media league darlings could play a game without their screaming "little jewel." Ms. Burke paved the way for uninterrupted play for the entire team in route to its ninth victory of the season. When Coach was unable to find the eleventh player for the 3:30 Mosswood tilt, "Super Godmommy" came through in the clutch and was awarded the game ball for her efforts.

The Potrero View now has a 9 - 3 record, good enough for a one-and-a-half game lead in Division One with a week remaining in the regular season. The playoffs start in September and last for years. We'll let you know.

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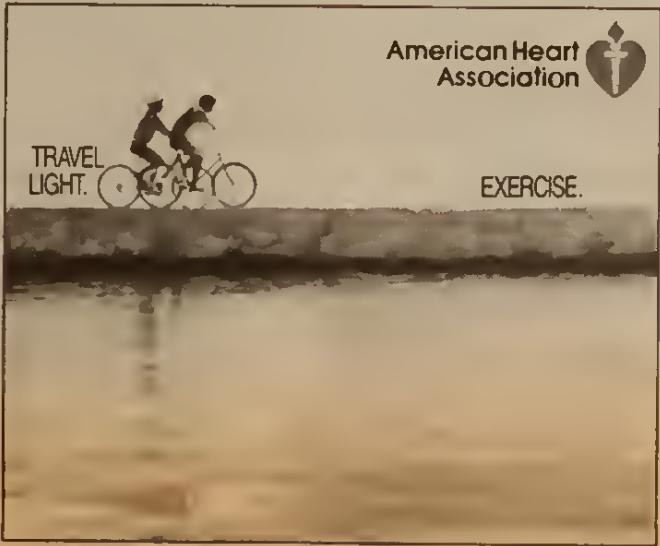
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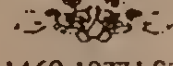
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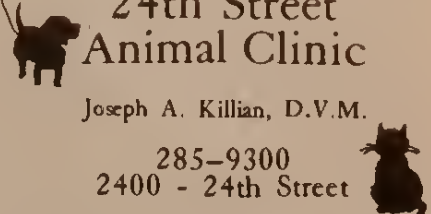
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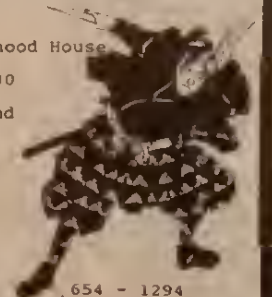
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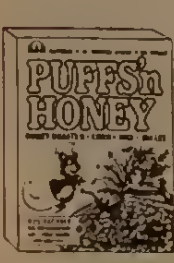
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